

Foster Parents

Changing Lives One Child at a Time

July 2006



New Requirements for Children's Administration to Notify Caregivers of Staffings and Court Hearings

Children's Administration wants to involve you more in the planning and decisions about children in your care. To do this we have updated our policy with two important changes.

Effective July 5, 2006, CA social workers are required to:

- Notify you within 10-days of a scheduled court hearing regarding the child in your care
- Notify you within 48 hours of case staffings regarding the child in your care. To help you learn more about these changes, you can go to the foster parent website (<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>) where you will find the following documents:
 - Caregiver letter explaining the new notification requirements
 - Fact sheet on the new notification requirements
 - Tool to help caregivers provide a written report to the Court

You can also get a copy of these documents by contacting your child's social worker, or by contacting Barb Bofinger, Program Manager at Children's Administration, at (360) 902-7986 or boba300@dshs.wa.gov.

Update: Foster Parent and Caregiver Conference!

"Plant a Dream, Grow a Child" is the theme of this year's annual conference. With the conference just 2 months away, information will soon be sent out regarding registration and workshops. Topics for this year's conference include: medical and educational advocacy; parent-child visits; placement stability; engagement, adolescent issues and much more. This year registration will be done by mailing in registration information only. Remember, scholarships are available on a first come first serve basis so send in your registration quickly. Scholarships include the conference registration fee, meals and hotel fees (double occupancy). This year there is a parking fee of \$8.00 per day that is not included in the scholarship. If you have questions please call or email Barb Bofinger at (360) 902-7986 or boba300@dshs.wa.gov.

Fun in the Sun

The summer season is here and that means lots of outside time. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) offers summer tips for caring for children including information about heat stress in exercising children, pool, and bug and playground safety. Visit their website at <http://aap.org/advocacy/releases/summertips.htm>

Sun Safety Tips:

Babies under 6 months: Avoiding sun exposure and dressing infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats are still the top recommendations from the AAP to prevent sunburn. However when adequate clothing and shade are not available, parents can apply a minimal amount of sunscreen to small areas, such as the infant's face and the back of the hands.

For Young Children: Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15.

For Older Children: 1) The first, and best, line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays), and cotton clothing with a tight weave. 2) Stay in the shade whenever possible, and avoid sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. 3) Use a sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 15 or greater. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult. 4) Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.

Confidentiality of Foster Parent Information

Children's Administration does not release your name or address to the Foster Parent Association of Washington State (FPWS), local foster parent associations, YMCA of Greater Seattle, or to Families for Kids (FFK). These agencies can provide support, information and referral, and key information to assist you in providing for the children in your care. We encourage you to contact each of these agencies and provide them with your information so that they can add you to their email and mailing list and you can then receive important information. Contact information for these agencies is:

Foster Parent Association of Washington State: www.fpaws.org or 1-800-391-CARE (2273)

Families for Kids (FFK): www.familiesforkids.org or 1-888-794-1794

YMCA of Greater Seattle: whyfoster@seattlemca.org or 1-800-760-5340

Foster Care Resource Network (Bremerton and Tacoma caregivers): 1-253-677-8122

Important Numbers

Important numbers to know when you take care of children in foster care or are thinking about doing so:

Statewide information about becoming a foster or adoptive parent: *Why Foster* statewide telephone line at 1-800-760-5340 or whyfoster@seattlemca.org Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

Statewide information about receiving foster parent support: *Families for Kids*: 1-888-794-1794 or www.familiesforkids.org Monday- Friday, 9:00 – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message. Receive a return call by the next business day.

Kitsap and Pierce County information about becoming a foster parent or to receive foster parent support: *Foster Care Resource Network*, 1-253-677-8122. Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call by the next business day.

General foster parent information for the state of Washington/FPAWS: *Foster Parent Association of Washington State*, 1-800-391-CARE (2273) or www.fpaws.org. FPAWS is seeking new members and supporting foster parents in many ways, including referrals to local associations.

Support for foster parents under investigation for allegations of abuse or neglect: *Foster Parent Investigation Retention Support Team* (FIRST) 1-253-219-6782, Monday – Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

CA Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis Line and general support on licensing and case management questions not abuse or neglect: *Caregiver Support/Crisis Line*: 1-800-301-1868. Weeknights from 4:30 p.m. – 8:00 a.m./weekends and holidays, 24 hours per day.

Family Help Line: 1-800-932-HOPE or www.parenttrust.org. The Family Help Line is a free, statewide training and referral line for the families of Washington State. Last year, the Family Help Line received over 5,000 calls and requests for information. Calls can last up to 90 minutes and parents can call as often as needed.

Children's Administration Foster Parent Website and Foster Parent Training Website

For information about Foster Parenting: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>

For information about Foster Parent Training: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp>

Join the 400 people who have subscribed to the List Serve:(r) <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=fosterparents&&A=1>